

Hédi Bouraoui Mediterranean Scholarship with Emphasis on the Maghreb 2013

Every year, the Canada-Mediterranean Centre awards the Hédi Bouraoui Mediterranean Scholarship to the graduate student who submits the best article or research proposal. I was honoured to be awarded the scholarship this year for an article I wrote about race relations and the securitization of immigration in Ceuta, a Spanish enclave located on the South shore of the Gibraltar Strait in North Africa. The article analyzes the differential problematizations of three groups of people by the so-called “Christian” majority in Ceuta: “Muslim Ceutíes,” “migrants,” and “*porteadores*” (carriers), and describes the flexible regime for governing “risks” at the border.

In the first part of the article, I focus on the treatment of the “Muslim Ceutíes.” I argue that *convivencia*, a local discourse and practice of tolerance meaning “living together,” can be analyzed as a regime for governing differences premised upon tolerance, and nevertheless contributing to the reproduction of a racialized and unequal social order. Describing race relations in the enclave, I argue that the discourses and practices of *convivencia* are used as a depoliticizing tool that helps secure the privileges of the “Christian majority” and maintain the Spanishness of the enclave.

The article then moves on to discuss the problematization of “migrants,” this group that generally includes irregular migrants and asylum seekers. I explain how the securitization of immigration in Ceuta is tied to the race relations already at play in this border town. I also discuss the securitization of the border itself and argue against the commonly held assumption that desecuritization and depoliticization can be analyzed as antidotes to securitization. Instead, I suggest that these strategies are complementary components of a flexible regime for managing the supposed threat posed by migrants in Ceuta.

In the final section, I analyze the treatment of a third group, the *porteadores*. These Moroccan women work as carriers, transporting goods on their backs across the Moroccan-Spanish border in Ceuta. The discussion of this third group allows me to further substantiate the thesis of a flexible regime for governing risks at the border by showing how these border crossers are framed and governed very differently than “migrants.”

The article, title “Muslim Ceutíes, Migrants and Porteadores: Race, Security and Tolerance at the Spanish-Moroccan Border” was published in the *Canadian Journal of Sociology* (vol. 38, n°4) in December 2013. I once again thank the Canada-Mediterranean Centre for their support.

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